



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION IX

75 Hawthorne Street

San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

January 14, 2008

Dr. Eric Takamura
Director, Department of Environmental Services
City and County of Honolulu
1000 Uluohia Street, Suite 308
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

Re: UV disinfection at Sand Island Wastewater Treatment Plant

Dear Dr. Takamura:

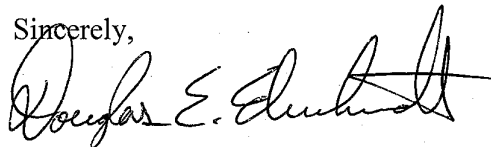
We received your letter, dated 27 December 2007, requesting that EPA and the Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) re-evaluate the need for continuous effluent disinfection at the Sand Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (NPDES permit HI0020117). We have reviewed your request and concluded that it is not appropriate to conduct the type of re-evaluation you suggest.

Although the permit includes a provision related to re-evaluation of continuous disinfection, circumstances have changed since the permit was issued. Most significantly, the permit required completion of construction of the disinfection unit and the one-year testing period prior to expiration of the permit. If this had been done, it would have made sense to re-evaluate continuous disinfection. However, construction of the disinfection unit was delayed and the permit has now expired. You have requested that, based on the requested re-evaluation, EPA consider revising the permit effluent limitation for enterococcus. However, expired permits may not be modified and so it is not possible until the permit is reissued to consider changing the effluent limitation. In addition, the permit was issued prior to EPA's promulgation of bacteria criteria in response to the BEACH Act. The effluent limitation in the current permit was calculated on the basis of meeting bacteria standards that applied to nearshore and shoreline locations. As a result of the promulgation, bacteria standards now apply also in state waters beyond 300 meters from shore. Thus, it may be that a more, not less, stringent bacteria limitation would now be appropriate.

Given that the current permit has expired, EPA believes that the appropriate time to evaluate effluent limitations for the discharge from the Sand Island wastewater treatment plant is when the permit is reissued, which will occur after EPA makes a final decision on the 301(h) application for the Sand Island facility. Until that time, EPA does not consider it appropriate to re-evaluate the current effluent limitations. EPA has discussed this with HDOH and they agree. Accordingly, we do not believe there would be value to a February 14 meeting on this request.

If you would like to discuss this, please contact me by telephone (415-972-3420) or e-mail (eberhardt.doug@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas E. Eberhardt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Douglas E. Eberhardt
Chief, CWA Standards and Permits Office

cc: Alec Wong, HDOH